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Alberta
SOCIAL SERVICES

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Alberta
SOCIAL SERVICES

Office of the Minister

424 Legislature Building, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5K 2B6 403/427-2606

To the Honourable David J. Carter
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Sir:

I have the honour to present the annual report of Alberta Social Services, which covers the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987.

Respectfully submitted,

Constantine E. Osterman

Constantine Osterman
Minister

Alberta
SOCIAL SERVICES

Office of the Deputy Minister
of Social Services

Seventh Street Plaza, 10030 - 107 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5J 3E4 403/427-6448

Honourable Constantine Osterman
Minister of Social Services

Madam:

I have the honour to present the annual report of Alberta Social Services, which covers the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987.

Respectfully submitted,

Stan Remple, Ph.D.
Deputy Minister
Social Services

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Alberta Social Services exists to protect and promote the social well-being of Albertans by providing statutory and mandated social service programs which encourage and support individual and family independence and self-reliance. This includes:

- protecting the safety and legal rights of children and dependent adults when these are threatened;
- ensuring that people's basic needs for food, clothing, shelter and care are met, when they or their families are unable to meet those needs;
- helping people who are dependent on public support or protection to regain independence or to become more self-reliant;
- preventing those at serious risk of becoming dependent on public support from doing so, or reducing the degree of support they may require in the future.

These objectives are supported and enhanced through the articulation of basic principles which guide the Department's program delivery and development: respect for basic human rights; support of personal responsibility and independence; pre-eminence of the family as the best place for problems to be resolved; the importance of prevention and early intervention; commitment to quality services; and accountability to the public for the services provided.

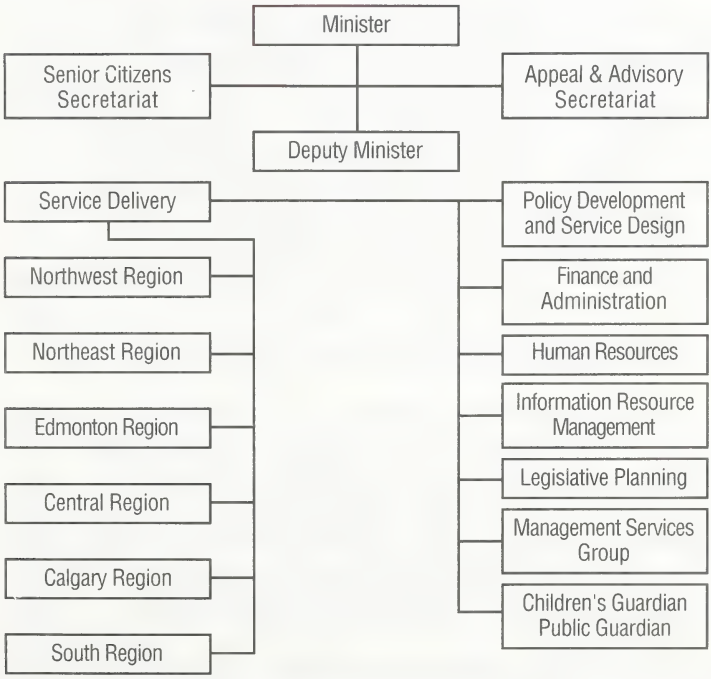
The 1986-87 fiscal year was a time of expenditure restraint for Alberta. Social Services met the challenge of controlled spending by introducing program and service adjustments directed at achieving greater value for money; streamlining services; encouraging partnership with community agencies interested in providing social services; supporting training programs and seminars; and introducing new technological innovations to assist in operations and management. Throughout this difficult time, a consistent factor was the dedication of management and staff.

The major organizational change that occurred was the separation of the two divisions of the Department. The former Community Health division became part of the new Department of Community and Occupational Health. Significant efforts were directed towards ensuring a smooth transition and consolidating the new Department of Social Services, in order to strengthen its ability to meet the challenges of a changing social environment.

The Department is optimistic that its co-operative efforts with the community have laid the foundation for a strong, community-based network of services for the future.

ALBERTA SOCIAL SERVICES

March 31, 1987



INCOME SUPPORT TO ALBERTANS

The Department of Social Services provides many financial and social support services to Albertans.

The income security and financial benefit programs include: Social Allowance, Alberta Assured Income Plan, Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped, Child (Day) Care, and Widow's Pension.

Social Support Services are provided for children and include: Child Protection, Handicapped Children's Services, and the Office of the Children's Guardian.

There are also a number of social support services available to adults and families, among them: Family Relations, Prevention of Family Violence, Women's Emergency Shelters, Residential Services to the Handicapped, Employment Support Services to the Handicapped, Employment Support to Social Allowance Recipients, the Office of the Public Guardian, the Senior Citizens Secretariat and the Appeal and Advisory Secretariat.

The following section provides further information about each of these services.

Social Allowance

The purpose of the Social Allowance program is to ensure that every Albertan who is in financial need, receives the basic necessities of life, as defined in legislation. This includes goods and services essential for health and well-being. The program encourages maximum financial self-sufficiency. "Guardian Social Allowance" is a program component under which payments are made to persons caring for dependent children, where the parents are unable or unwilling to provide care.

Social Allowance is the largest single program in Social Services, with expenditures for it accounting for slightly more than half of the total Department budget. Social Allowance benefits include payments to clients to buy food, clothing, household goods and shelter, as well as other approved needs such as dental, medical and optical services, transportation, laundry, telephone, special diets, funerals and other needs. Where appropriate, clients are also referred to employment and client support services that are expected to help them regain access to employment and to financial self-sufficiency.

Factors which determine the amount of financial assistance granted are: family size, family composition, income, special needs related to individual circumstances, such as illness. Whether an applicant is considered employable also influences benefit levels and entitlement to receive payment for items such as those related to job search or employment. The shelter and basic allowance (the latter covers food, clothing, household and personal allowance) account for more than 80% of program expenditures.

Normally, clients undergo a general screening at first contact, and are then scheduled for an application interview with a caseworker and advised about the documentation they should provide. If necessary, a district office cheque or voucher is issued immediately, to meet emergency needs until the regular monthly cheque arrives by mail. Sixty percent of clients receive their cheques through automatic payroll. It arrives by mail shortly before the end of each month for the following month, to allow for payment of rent.

Clients have the right to appeal Department decisions regarding their benefits to citizens appeal panels. In 1986, more that 5,500 appeals were heard, of which 65% resulted in changes to the original decision of the Department.

Table 1: **Average Monthly Social Allowance Caseload by Reason for Assistance 1986-87**

	NW	NE	EDM	CEN	CAL	SOU	TOTAL
Aged (Over 60)	257	168	1343	283	1084	192	3326
Single Parent	1524	1149	8650	2482	6064	1494	21363
Physical Ill Health	638	461	3267	955	2398	474	8193
Mental Ill Health	126	59	802	230	655	122	1995
Employable	2100	1323	10497	2764	9861	1392	27936
TOTAL	4644	3160	24560	6714	20062	3674	62813
Guardian Social Allowance	360	286	584	233	324	85	1872
Transients							500*

NOTE: Numbers may not add up to total, due to rounding.

* Regional breakdown is not available.

Fifty percent of provincial expenditures under the Social Allowance program are recovered from the federal government, under the terms of the Canada Assistance Plan.

About 1/3 of the Social Allowance caseload consists of single parent families, of which 95% are headed by women. About 1/4 of the single parents are working part-time or full-time and require supplementation of their employment income; another are seeking employment.

About 15% of the caseload is not required to seek employment, due to physical or mental handicaps. Most of the persons in this group are single. About 1,300 cases are also in receipt of the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped, but need a supplement due to exceptional medical expenses or because of large family size.

More than 40% of all cases are categorized as employable, with about 13% of them already employed part-time or full-time and needing supplementation of their employment income in order to meet the basic needs of their families.

- To further the Department's continuing objective to both validate eligibility for benefits and prevent overpayments, new intake procedures were developed during this fiscal year.
- A comprehensive review of the objectives, program policy and delivery procedures of all income security programs (called SPISI - the Special Project on Income Security Initiatives) was continued this year. The aim of the long-term review is increased efficiency, effectiveness, and the minimization of errors in approving financial benefits.
- The Department co-operated with the Edmonton Social Planning Council in producing a booklet representing a "layman's view of welfare", a guide to the program's rules from the point of view of the recipient. The Department also assisted in the distribution of the pamphlet through its district offices.

Table 2: **Average Monthly AISH Caseload During 1986-87**

REGION	AISH	AISH +	MODIFIED AISH	TOTAL
Northwest	813	95	31	939
Northeast	1006	67	38	111
Edmonton	4482	527	325	5334
Central	1295	94	46	1435
Calgary	2892	357	207	3456
South	1283	91	89	1463
TOTAL	11771	1230	736	13737

Alberta Assured Income Plan (AAIP)

The purpose of AAIP is to provide an automatic income supplement to seniors in Alberta who are in receipt of either the federal Guaranteed Income Supplement or the Federal Spouses Allowance. The program provided benefits ranging from $10 to $95 per month, as of March 31, 1987. Cheques are produced on the basis of payments of federal benefits.

Forty-eight percent of Alberta's senior citizens receive AAIP. Over 30% of single recipients receive maximum benefits, while less than 10% of couples receive maximum benefits.

The average monthly caseload in 1986-87 was 87,953.

Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)

The purpose of AISH is to provide pension-type financial benefits, as well as drug, ambulance, optical and dental care coverage to severely and permanently disabled persons 18 to 64 years of age, who have little or no income. The maximum benefit, as of March 31, 1987, was $720 per month. Persons who cannot meet their basic needs from this amount may qualify to receive a supplement under the Social Allowance program through an informal program commonly referred to as AISH PLUS.

Recipients living in nursing homes, auxiliary hospitals and other facilities receive a reduced benefit, because most of their basic needs are supplied by the institution. This is referred to as modified AISH.

Decisions of the Department can be appealed to a citizen's review committee, and 946 such appeals were heard in 1986, of which 45% resulted in changes.

Most (82%) recipients are single and without dependants, and half have been in receipt of benefits under the program for 4 years or longer.

Child Care

The purpose of the child care program is to set and enforce minimum standards in licensed day care facilities, and to provide financial assistance on behalf of families who use formal day care services.

Financial assistance is provided to day care facilities, on behalf of families, through the payment of operating allowances, low income family subsidies, administrative fees and funding for the integration of handicapped children in day care.

Day care centres and family day home services are operated on a commercial or non-profit basis, under private or public auspices, by organizations or individuals at the community level.

Financial support services are provided through the following mechanisms:

The day care subsidy program provides financial assistance for low income families with pre-school children who are attending licensed day care centres or satellite family day homes. The subsidy helps to pay for day care while parents are working or attending educational institutions. The subsidy is paid to the child care provider. Based on their ability to pay, as assessed by a sliding fee schedule, parents contribute a minimum of $45.00/month and up to the full cost of care. The maximum subsidy is $240.00/month.

The operating allowance is provided to licensed day care centres to fund enrolled spaces, regardless of parents' income.

Integrated day care provides additional financial support and consultation services to facilities caring for children with special needs.

An administrative fee is provided to family day home agencies who contract with Alberta Social Services. The agencies supervise satellite family day homes, which are allowed a maximum of three children per home.

Table 3: Facilities (Other Than Day Care Facilities) Licensed Under the Social Care Facilities Licensing Act - as of March 31, 1987

	NO. OF FACILITIES	LICENSED CAPACITY
Nursery Schools	428	9863
Programs for School-Age Children	303	6578
Adult Homes for Special Care	232	5151
Children's Institutions	158	2030
Licensed Foster Homes	138	707
Social Care Facilities	34	188

Day care facilities are licensed and monitored by regional licensing staff, who also have responsibility for the licensing of all other social care facilities in the province (e.g. residences for children and handicapped adults and women's emergency shelters).

- During 1986/87, a comprehensive review of day care licensing in the province began with a view to updating, improving, and publishing a new licensing policy manual for interpreting the Day Care Regulation. From the study's beginning and at each stage of review, opinions and comments from the community were considered and acted upon. Day care operators and provincial associations were among the people consulted. Feedback was encouraged and evaluated throughout the developmental stage. A draft of the new licensing policy manual was started.

- A survey was completed of parents who use family day home services, agencies who screen and monitor the homes, and providers who care for children.

- An extensive review was undertaken to compare services offered in other provinces for integrating young children with handicaps into preschool daycare programs.

- In January 1987, recovery of the $4.4 million in operating advances provided to day care centres began and at the end of the fiscal year $2.6 million had been repaid.

- In February 1987, a system by which payments to day care facilities could be paid electronically into bank accounts was made available. The system has reduced the time from issuing a cheque to its receipt by up to one month. Approximately 60% of all day care operators in the province took advantage of the new payment system during the fiscal year.

- In 1986/87 the estimated number of children under 6 years of age in Alberta was 248,000. Of these, 29,100 or 12% were in Department-funded day care, including day care centres and family day homes.

- In 1986/87, there were approximately 171,000 families with children under six years of age in Alberta. In about 20,000 or 12% of these families, the parents worked or attended training and used the formal government-funded child care system. The approximately 20,000 families who use government-funded child care have a total of 29,100 children. Of these 23,800 attend day care centres and 5,300 are enrolled in family day homes.

Table 4: **Licensed/Approved Child Care Facilities as of March 31, 1987**

REGION	DAY CARE CENTRES		LICENSED FAMILY DAY HOMES		SATELLITE FAMILY DAY HOMES	
	#'s	SPACES	#'s	SPACES	#'s (Est)	ENROLEES
Northwest	23	987	17	91	142	284
Northeast	21	852	2	11	238	477
Edmonton	313	13695	12	70	973	1946
Central	45	2066	6	34	266	532
Calgary	204	11424	31	173	657	1314
South	43	1892	2	10	314	629
TOTAL	649	30916	70	389	2590	5182

Table 5: **Number of Children on Whose Behalf Operating Allowances Were Paid to Day Care Centres 1986-87**

NORTHWEST	NORTHEAST	EDMONTON	CENTRAL	CALGARY	SOUTH	TOTAL
755	533	10111	1568	8397	1477	22841

Table 6: **Average Number of Family Day Home Agencies Receiving Administrative Fees 1986-87**

NORTHWEST	NORTHEAST	EDMONTON	CENTRAL	CALGARY	SOUTH	TOTAL
229	421	1880	479	1203	511	4723

Table 7: **Average Monthly Number of Subsidized Children - 1986/87**

NORTHWEST	NORTHEAST	EDMONTON	CENTRAL	CALGARY	SOUTH	TOTAL
375	395	5612	908	4102	1130	12522

Widow's Pension

The purpose of the Widow's Pension is to provide pension-type financial benefits and coverage for medical, optical and dental services to widows or widowers aged 55 to 64, who have limited or no income. The maximum benefit,as of March 31, 1987, was $720 per month.

Approximately 300 clients of this program receive only the premium free medical benefits and provincial housing subsidies; 200 clients are also eligible for the federal Widowed Spouses' Allowance.

- A significant innovation in this fiscal year was the decision to administer all new applications and re-applications through designated banks, as of April 1, 1986. Three-quarters of the clients received benefits through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) directly into their bank accounts. This change was seen partly as a test to determine whether other income security benefits could be delivered to clients through the banking system.
- The average monthly caseload in 1986/87 was 3,435.

Table 8: DISTRIBUTION OF BENEFITS

Percentage of Clients Receiving Specified Range of Financial Benefits

BENEFITS ($)	% CASELOAD
0	11.1
1-50	12.0
51-100	18.0
101-150	15.5
151-200	4.5
201-250	3.8
251-300	3.8
301-350	2.9
351-400	2.8
401-450	2.7
451-500	4.2
501-550	4.3
551-600	2.6
601-650	1.5
651-700	1.3
701-719	0.5
720	8.5

SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Child Protection

The purpose of Child Protection Services is to ensure that the survival, security and development of children are protected. Services are provided, wherever possible, within the context of the natural family, with the objective of providing permanent, nurturing relationships for children.

Child Protection Services provides a wide range of programs and services to protect, enhance and support the development and functioning of children and their families, in the least intrusive way possible. Emphasis is placed on reducing the number of children entering care, and reducing their length of stay in care and on the utilization and development of community-based resources that promote family support and protection.

Complaints or reports of a child in need of protection from abuse or neglect or requests for assistance by parents or children, are received by district offices. If the causes of a child being in need of protection can be alleviated without apprehending the child, the child welfare worker may refer the family to an appropriate community resource.

If it is determined that a child's survival, security or development is endangered in his or her current situation, the child may be removed from his or her home and placed temporarily in a safe environment, such as a receiving or foster home. (This process is known as "apprehension" and is governed by procedures under The Child Welfare Act).

Table 9: **Legal Status of Children Receiving Child Protection Services as of March 31, 1987**

	NW	NE	EDM	CEN	CAL	SOU	TOTAL
Custody Agreement	103	84	365	93	217	70	932
Family Support Agreement	268	212	1288	202	323	350	2643
Apprehension	1	1	26	1	26	3	58
Permanent Guardianship	205	234	818	241	616	133	2247
Temporary Guardianship	104	91	218	51	150	81	695
Supervision	33	17	119	35	54	18	276
HCS	407	188	1228	393	990	373	3579
Other	16	23	57	13	57	24	190
Not Coded	68	63	207	60	209	35	643
TOTAL	1205	913	4326	1089	2642	1087	11263

Family Support Services include contractual agreements signed by a guardian and the Department (Family Support Agreements) or court orders that allow the Department to supervise the child and guardian in their own home (Supervision Order). The purpose of a Support Agreement is to provide support services to a family whose child has been found to be in need of protective services, while maintaining the child at home. An example of a support agreement might involve the provision of a homemaker service to a family, where a single parent is found to be neglecting the children. There is also provision to enter into a Support Agreement with a child 16 years of age or over, where the child is living independently of his or her guardian, and the survival, security and development of the child will be protected if the child continues to live independently of the guardian.

Children who are in need of protective services and who cannot be protected in their own home, (even through support or supervision) are placed in care. This is the result of an agreement or court order through which the Department assumes custody and guardianship of the child, either on a temporary or permanent basis. Forty percent of the children in the care of the Department are Native.

The Foster Care program provides children who have been found to be in need of protective services under The Child Welfare Act, with a substitute home for varying lengths of time. Since the family is recognized as a basic unit of society, the role of foster parents as a substitute family is emphasized.

Ongoing contact with the natural parents is strongly promoted while children are in foster care.

The Residential Services Program provides services to children in care who, because of moderate to severe emotional or behavioral problems, cannot be maintained in their own home or in substitute family care. These resources range from residential treatment centres to small community group homes. Some residential resources are operated by the Department, while others are contracted to private operators. Placements require the approval of local child welfare regional placement committees.

The Adoption Program encompasses both private and ward adoptions. In both cases, the legal effect of an adoption is that the adopted child becomes the child of the adopting parents, who assume the permanent responsibilities of guardianship, as if the child had been born to the family.

- During the fiscal year, the program's status was reviewed over the months since the new Child Welfare Act was introduced in July 1985. The number of cases was down significantly from the previous year; fewer children were under guardianship; more custody agreements were in force; and to a large degree, less intrusive measures and more voluntary rather than court-ordered types of intervention were in operation. Through mediation and negotiation with parents, the Department was successful in providing protective care for children in their own homes.

- Also during the fiscal year, a study was made of the needs of adolescents who are reaching the age where they must leave the child welfare system. A report called "Transitional Planning for Adolescents" was prepared, with recommendations for changes in resources available to such youth.

- Permanent relationships for the children in the care of Social Services is the aim of the Department. To this end, a new case management system was developed during the fiscal year that ensures that plans for children are geared towards a permanent and stable living environment.

- There are many "adoptable" children in the province, but because they have special needs or require special care for physical or emotional problems, it has been difficult in the past to find suitable homes and adoptive parents for them. During 1986-87, the Child Protection Branch undertook a major initiative to significantly increase the number of adoptions of children with special needs. The main purpose is to find permanent and caring homes for the children, thus reducing the number living in temporary foster homes and institutions.

Table 10: **Placement of Children Legally in the Care of Social Services as of March 31, 1987**

	NW	NE	EDM	CEN	CAL	SOU	TOTAL
Parents' Home*	224	127	764	129	1231	395	2870
Relatives' Home	12	32	50	10	22	17	143
Foster Home	264	295	922	260	512	190	2443
Group Home	34	39	125	55	139	35	427
Adoption Home	10	15	74	26	51	19	195
Residence/Institution	36	36	168	26	149	35	450
Compulsory Care	0	1	5	0	2	0	8
Detention	2	0	1	0	4	0	7
Other	32	31	135	67	128	29	422
Not Available	591	337	2082	516	404	367	4298
TOTAL	1205	913	4326	1089	2642	1089	11263

* Includes H.C.S.

For the 2,443 children placed in foster homes, there was a total of 1,736 approved foster homes, as of March 31, 1987, and an additional 179 homes were pending approval or on probation.

A total of 86 group homes were available on a contract basis, as at March 31, 1987. These facilities have 4-8 spaces available in each home.

There were 20 institutions for the treatment of children with behavioral or emotional problems, as at March 31, 1987. These included both government-operated and contracted institutions.

Handicapped Children's Services (H.C.S.)

The purpose of the Handicapped Children's Services program is to assist families of handicapped children with the extraordinary demands and costs resulting directly from the handicapping condition, in order to maintain their children within the family home.

H.C.S. provides funds for a variety of services that are delivered by community based groups, including professional practitioners. Funds are paid to the family of the handicapped child, or directly to the service provider, under an agreement negotiated by an H.C.S. worker with the parents.

Most children served by the program live in their family home. In 1986-87, only 5.5% of the children lived in facilities other than the family home.

Table 11: **Handicapped Children's Services Cases as of March 31, 1987**

NORTHWEST	NORTHEAST	EDMONTON	CENTRAL	CALGARY	SOUTH	TOTAL
407	188	1228	393	990	373	3579

Children's Guardian

Under the provisions of the Child Welfare Act, the Children's Guardian fulfills the role of legal guardian for those children in the care of Alberta Social Services whose guardians are either unwilling or unable to care for them. He is the sole legal guardian of children who are subjects of permanent guardianship orders or agreements and joint guardian of children who are subjects of temporary guardianship orders.

The Children's Guardian monitors the services provided to children under guardianship, advocates for change when problems are identified, and makes the major decisions that parents usually make for their children.

- In recognition that Native children have special needs and require services that take into consideration their cultural heritage, a major thrust of this year was the recruitment of Native children's guardians. Two Native children's guardians were formally appointed.

- A review was commenced of the Office of the Children's Guardian to determine what, if any, changes should be made to The Child Welfare Act. This comprehensive review examined the roles of child welfare directors, the appeal panel, and the Children's Guardian, whose duties are carried out by regional and Native Children's Guardian.

Table 12: **Average Monthly Number of Children for Whom the Children's Guardian Had Responsibility - 1986-87**

REGION	PERMANENT GUARDIANSHIP ORDERS AND AGREEMENTS	TEMPORARY GUARDIANSHIP	TOTAL
Northwest	233	113	336
Northeast	228	113	341
Edmonton	816	273	1089
Central	245	54	299
Calgary	630	186	816
South	129	99	228
TOTAL	2271	838	3109

SERVICES FOR ADULTS AND FAMILIES

Family Relations

Family Relations is a Department-delivered service which:

- helps families resolve legal issues related to marital breakdown, including disputes over custody of, or access to, children,
- assists in establishing the paternity of children born out of wedlock,
- assists families in obtaining appropriate maintenance orders and agreements.

All applications from separated persons for Social Allowance and all applications for Guardian Social Allowance are reviewed to see whether the person legally responsible to support the family is financially able to do so. Where appropriate, maintenance is either negotiated with the person responsible, or, if this should not prove feasible, the responsible parent or spouse is summoned to court on a Department-initiated application for maintenance. All court orders obtained are registered with the Maintenance Enforcement Program, Department of the Attorney General, for collection and enforcement. Any maintenance money paid directly to the Social Allowance client is deducted from the assistance paid by the Department.

All applications for Social Allowance from unwed mothers are referred to family relations workers who, in appropriate cases, either assist the mothers in obtaining a paternity agreement, or arrange for court appearances to settle the matter of proving paternity and obtaining child maintenance. This is mandatory for unmarried mothers in receipt of Social Allowance, but it is also a service offered free of charge to other unwed mothers.

Members of the general public are assisted in making application to the Family Courts for custody and/or access orders, in cases where a dispute cannot be settled amicably. Formal mediation and conciliation services are offered in some regions, predominantly in the Edmonton region. In some areas, Department personnel offer assistance to family members who are making application to the courts under The Mental Health Act, for warrants of conveyance to a psychiatric hospital for evaluation. Members of the public, after appropriate assessment by the family relations worker, may also be assisted in the laying of charges for non-support and for assault or threats under The Criminal Code.

Table 13: **Average Monthly Family Relations Caseload 1986-87**

REGION	MAINTE-NANCE	COURT SERVICES	CUSTODY INVESTI-GATIONS	TOTAL
Northwest	t1529	51	1	1581
Northeast	1003	7	1	1011
Edmonton	6622	607	25	7254
Central	2320	37	1	2358
Calgary	4883	490	54	5427
South	2086	73	1	2160
TOTAL	18443	1265	83	19791

Upon order of the Family Court, family relations workers produce professional assessments and homestudies to aid the courts in the awarding of custody or access orders.

- During 1986-87, Social Services worked closely with the Department of the Attorney General to review Alberta family law, focussing on recommendations for change in the areas of maintenance and child custody. As a result, the jurisdiction for maintenance collection and enforcement cases was transferred from Social Services to the Maintenance Enforcement Program, Department of the Attorney General. The Department began the process of registering over 8,000 Social Allowance clients' maintenance orders and agreements with the Department of the Attorney General.

- The Edmonton Custody Mediation project, a service which focuses on mediating child custody disputes in divorce actions, was successful in amicably settling 67% of disputes, without the need for court-imposed decisions.

- A pilot project began in three regions this fiscal year, to assess the effects and the benefits of providing mediation services. The service is offered to Social Allowance applicants who have a dispute over maintenance or child custody and access.

Prevention of Family Violence

The purpose of the Office for the Prevention of Family Violence is to provide support and leadership in developing an effective approach to the problem of family violence in Alberta, including the abuse of women, men, children and the elderly in families. The Office provides information, education and training, consultation and community liaison and co-ordination services.

- During 1986-87, the Office received and responded to 1,400 requests for information (425% more than in the previous fiscal year). 96,200 items were distributed.

- The Office for the Prevention of Family Violence assisted Grant MacEwan Community College with a major national conference on family violence. It was attended by more than 900 people.

Table 14: **Beds Available in Community Based Women's Emergency Shelters, as of March 31, 1987**

REGION	BEDS
Northwest	21
Northeast	39
Edmonton	81
Central	35
Calgary	64
South	39
TOTAL	279

Women's Emergency Shelters

The purpose of this program is to provide short-term, safe and supportive environments for abused women and their children and for other women in crisis. Shelters, which provide accommodation for up to 21 days, and second-stage housing, which provides apartment suites for up to 6 months, are operated by non-profit community-based organizations. Social Services contributes to the cost of essential services -- staffing, accommodation, food, clothing, personal incidentals, emergency accommodation and child care programming in shelters. Social Services also funds counselling services in a second stage housing project in Calgary. Shelters receive revenue from various sources to cover the cost of services not funded by Social Services.

- In April 1986, the Alberta government allocated an additional $1.1 million for shelters for women.
- Negotiations were undertaken with the federal government to share costs for the women's shelter program. A change in intake procedures was introduced as a pilot project, in order to obtain federal cost-sharing.
- Working with the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters, an automated system was introduced to provide accurate information about the scope and nature of family violence, as it affected the women and children who used the shelters.

Shelters for Homeless Adults

Temporary accommodations and meals are provided to adults who are employable but temporarily unemployed and in need of assistance, through this program. It provides a sheltered environment while helping them to regain and maintain their health and social functioning skills. Services are provided through non-profit, community-based agencies and Department-operated services, such as Gunn Centre and the Single Men's Hostels.

Edmonton, Calgary and the Northwest Region are the only areas that have developed these types of facilities. Edmonton has the largest number of shelter spaces.

Table 15: **Average Annual Occupancy Rates -1986/87**

		Spaces	% Occupied
Northwest	Wapiti Lodge	30	80.0
Edmonton	Single Men's Hostel	249	30.6
	Urban Manor	69	93.5
	Gunn Centre	109	75.0
	Women's Emerg. Accom.	35	67.1
Calgary	Single Men's Hostel	238	49.0
	Provincial Spaces	30	

Residential Services to the Handicapped

The purpose of the Residential Services to the Handicapped program is to develop processes to identify individual needs and objectives, obtain resources, and monitor the effectiveness of services to support Albertans who have a mental and/or physical disability, in their adaptation or re-adaptation to community life.

The program funds or provides residential care and professional services, and supports the development of services designed to meet the unique needs of each person with a disability. Grants for administration and some programming were provided to seven provincial agencies representing Alberta's population with disabilities.

Services provided or funded by the Department encompass individual case planning; community group homes; approved homes (room and board in private homes); outreach services to increase clients' independent living skills; respite services to provide relief to families caring for a person with disabilities; institutional facilities; and a variety of support services, such as personal care attendants or developmental training to assist disabled persons to live in the community.

- An important commitment to Albertans with handicaps was made by Premier Getty, when he announced, in March 1987, the formation of the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

Table 16: **PROFILE OF COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL SERVICES TO THE HANDICAPPED (MARCH 31, 1987)**

	NW	NE	EDM	CEN	CAL	SOU	TOTAL
Approved Home Spaces	25	0	35	60	90	43	253
Group Home Spaces	90	89	356	174	315	73	1097
Respite Services (In Home and Host Families)	-	30	12	-	600	34	676
Community Living Support Programs	-	-	-	19	69		88
TOTAL	115	119	403	234	1024	219	2114

Table 17: **FACILITIES OF OVER 20 BEDS PROVIDING RESIDENTIAL SERVICES TO THE HANDICAPPED (MARCH 31, 1987)**

FACILITIES	REGION	CLIENTS SERVED	SPACES
Michener Centre	Central	Adult	1289
		Child	16
		Relief	20
Baker Centre	Calgary	Institutional -	
		Adult	12
		Child	12
		On Site Group Homes -	
		Adult	27
		Child	27
		Community Group Homes -	
		Adult	6
Rosecrest	Edmonton	Child	14
		Relief	8
Eric Cormack	Edmonton	Adult	72
		Child	14
		Relief	3
Resources for the Dependent Handicapped	Edmonton	Adult	45
		Child	46
		Relief	3
Alfred Egan Home/ Bow Island	South	Adult	27
		Child	1
		Relief	3
Fort Macleod	South	Adult	22
		Child	6
		Relief	2
TOTAL			1674

Table 18: **Social Allowance Clients Receiving Services from the Employment Opportunities Program during 1986-87**

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SERVICES	NW	NE	EDM	CEN	CAL	SOU	TOTAL
COUNSELLING	10	7	272	4	19	33	345
TRAINING	186	93	679	230	639	375	2202
EMPLOYED	119	377	765	81	430	226	1998
TOTAL	315	477	1716	315	1088	634	4545

Employment Support Services to the Handicapped

This program assists handicapped individuals to attain self-sufficiency and independence by providing training and employment support.

The Department contracts with 44 non-profit agencies to provide vocational training suitable to particular types and degrees of handicapping conditions. Vocational rehabilitation services were provided in 1986-87 to more than 2500 people who were not qualified for programs offered by Advanced Education or Career Development and Employment.

Employment Support Services to Social Allowance Recipients

This grouping of programs assists individuals receiving financial support under the Social Allowance program to attain self-sufficiency and independence, by providing training and employment support.

The Employment Opportunities Program offers employment preparation, career counselling, referral and placement in training programs and work experience.

Job Finding Centres are run by private contractors and provide instruction in job search techniques to participants, who receive a training allowance. Five Job Finding Centres were funded during the fiscal year and 2,000 people participated in the program between September, 1985 and February, 1987.

The Employment Skills Program (ESP) pays the wages of employable Social Allowance recipients who have no recent work experience and who need to develop competitive work skills. In 1986, employer participation was expanded from applying only to Alberta government departments, to including municipalities and publicly funded organizations, such as school boards, hospitals and health authorities. The program is funded by Alberta Career Development and Employment, and delivered by Alberta Social Services. A total of 813 clients were placed in employment, across the Province, through this program.

Table 19: **Numbers of Dependent Adults Under Guardianship as of March 31, 1987**

REGION	PUBLIC GUARDIAN	PRIVATE GUARDIANS	TOTAL
Edmonton/North	302	2041	2343
Michener/Central	974	1615	2589
Calgary/South*	465	1712	2177
TOTAL	1741	5368	7109

* Lethbridge is included in South region.

Public Guardian

The purpose of the Public Guardian program is to meet the intent and administer the provisions of Alberta's adult guardianship legislation, the Dependent Adults Act. This enables the appointment of guardians and trustees as substitute decision makers for adults who are unable to care for themselves, and/or manage their financial affairs. The legislation also provides for the confinement of dependent adults who are a danger to themselves or others, in a facility that ensures protection and treatment.

Individuals, usually family members, apply to the Surrogate Court to be appointed as guardians and/or trustees of persons who are repeatedly or continuously unable to make reasonable judgements about personal or financial matters. Where no relative or friend is willing, able or suitable, the Public Guardian or Public Trustee may be appointed.

Where the legal costs of applying for guardianship or trusteeship through private solicitors would be a hardship, the Court may allocate all or part of the costs to the Crown. Crown costs for guardianship and joint guardianship- trusteeship hearings are paid for by the Office of the Public Guardian.

The Dependent Adults Act was created to meet the need for substitute decision-making for mentally retarded adults in institutions or the community. However, an increasing number of cases involve elderly people who have other conditions leading to mental impairment. These elderly dependent adults are usually cared for in nursing homes or other institutions.

The Public Guardian does not have custody of or provide direct care to dependent adults. The primary service is making decisions and giving consents, mainly in the areas of health care, vocational placement, living arrangements and legal matters. The program is delivered throughout the province by professional staff located in Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary, and Lethbridge.

Table 20: **Numbers of Applications to the Court for Guardianship Under the Dependent Adults Act During 1986-87**

REGION	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TOTAL
Original Applications	161	941	1102
Review Applications	689	1123	1821

- During 1986-87 increased emphasis was given to the development of innovative options that involved the community in delivering support and educational services to private guardians. Eleven community agencies were funded as part of this effort.
- The aim of the Office of the Public Guardian is to encourage private rather than public guardianship. During the fiscal year, there were 5 times as many court orders for private guardianship as for public guardianship.
- The Public Guardian searches for the least restrictive and costly legal and institutional arrangements. During 1986-87, alternatives to formal guardianship were found for 40 people for whom guardianship was being considered. Also, suitable residences were found for 36 dependent adults, so that they did not need institutional placement.
- The Grande Prairie sub-office was closed in 1986-87 as an efficiency measure, and public guardian clients are now served by the office in Edmonton.

Senior Citizens Secretariat

The Senior Citizens Secretariat provides information and assists in the co-ordination of programs and services for older people. It is headed by an MLA who reports through the Minister of Social Services.

The Secretariat gathers and provides information on services and benefits; on aging and on work with older people; and on demographics, service utilization and program expenditures on services for the elderly (persons 65 and over) in Alberta. Information is provided to the general public, including senior citizens, community and institutional agencies and services, and government departments and agencies. A variety of printed material is developed and distributed by the Secretariat. About 800 to 900 inquiries are handled each month. The Secretariat provides staff services to the Provincial Senior Citizens Advisory Council, a government-appointed body representing various regions of the province.

- This was a year of evaluation and redefinition of goals and objectives. In June 1986, the former Senior Citizens Bureau, which was a unit of the Department of Social Services, became the Senior Citizens Secretariat, and the direct reporting relationship to the Minister was established.

- The Secretariat approved an operating grant of $114,500 for the Alberta Council on Aging, a voluntary organization comprised of seniors, senior citizens' associations and others providing services to the elderly. As well, during the fiscal year, the Secretariat provided grants totaling $228,129 for special projects, education and research.

Appeal and Advisory Secretariat

The Appeal and Advisory Secretariat is an autonomous body responsible to the Office of the Minister. Appeal panels are established by the Secretariat to deal with various social issues. It is to this Office that people affected by certain decisions made by Social Services staff and some court rulings are able to bring requests to be heard, if they have concerns. The Secretariat also provides support to a variety of ministerial advisory committees.

- A continuing area of serious concern to the Department is the matter of private adoptions. A report prepared by the Minister's Subcommittee on Private Adoption Practices and Procedures in Alberta was submitted to The Provincial Advisory Committee on the Family in February 1986. During the early part of this fiscal year, the recommendations contained in this comprehensive study were the subject of extensive activity by the Secretariat.

- The number of appeals heard about day care licensing was high during 1986-87, reflecting the growing sensitivity on the part of the Department towards enforcing high standards for the safety and security of the province's children.

- The Appeal and Advisory Secretariat worked closely with the Working Committee on Native Child Welfare, during this fiscal year, as the committee undertook a comprehensive study aimed at presenting policy and program alternatives for Indian and Metis child welfare. The recommendations of the report "In the Interest of Native Child Welfare" were taken into consideration by the appeal panel when judgements were made.

Social Services is a decentralized organization, whose mode of delivering services to its clients is dependent on the existence and commitment of six Service Delivery Regions and Michener Centre. At the heart of this delivery system are the 52 district offices (in 1986/87), that are located throughout the Province. They are responsible for providing support and assistance to Albertans in need of services, often through direct client contact.

Direct service delivery is also provided through the operation of institutions and residential facilities, such as those for the handicapped, treatment centres for troubled children, and hostels for adults.

The Department also makes extensive use of contracts and grants with private agencies or individuals, in order to provide a wide range of services for clients. These include: psychological assessments; residential care or treatment for children with status under the Child Welfare Act; a range of services for families; residential care for disabled adults; vocational training for disabled adults; and centres for battered women and their children. Negotiation and support of these agency-based services may come from workers in district offices or from specialists in regional offices, depending on local arrangements.

NORTHWEST REGION

Covering more that 40% of the province's total land area, the Northwest Region is headquartered in McLennan. For the most part, this region is rural and its communities are isolated. During the year, staff travelled 1.75 million kilometers by car and took 129 air flights, in order to provide services to their clients.

During 1986/87, the Northwest Region's efforts were directed towards consolidation and reorganization of a number of key areas, in order to strengthen the ability of its staff to meet the challenges of serving clients living in the Department's largest region. The newly appointed regional director spearheaded the reorganization of the regional office, in order to clearly identify reporting relationships and roles. The recruitment of the full complement of senior management and professional staff was also completed.

Highlights:

- A new contract unit was formed to allow for closer scrutiny of the $8.5 million in services provided by contractors, and to negotiate, monitor and evaluate services.
- Under the aegis of the contract unit, and in co-operation with Alberta Community and Occupational Health, a Respite Care program was introduced in Grande Prairie. Trained staff provided care to disabled persons, if the usual caregiver was absent or required relief from the burdens of constant care. Staff were recruited, trained and supervised by Community and Occupational Health, which administers the program. Social Services pays for the administration costs.
- A training program was introduced in the "24-hour planning approach". Workshops were held in Peace River, Barrhead, and Grande Prairie and were attended by agency personnel, parents, and staff. This comprehensive planning technique establishes priorities for families and individuals and includes all the people most involved with the client (parents and other family members, social workers, teachers). They then discuss and decide which services, supports, and people are needed to meet all of the affected adult's or children's needs.
- A desire to successfully integrate young people into the community led to the amalgamation of the Youth Assessment Centre and the High Prairie District Office, under one administration. This goal also led to the launching of a training project, referred to as the "Transitional Program", to help older adolescents become more effective in meeting the challenges of personal responsibility and independent living.

NORTHEAST REGION

The Northeast Region's 166,000 people live mainly in small towns or on farms, although there are two major cities in the Region - Fort McMurray and Lloydminster. The people engage in farming in the south, oil and gas in the north and east, and forestry and tourism in the central areas. These varied economic bases, along with diverse ethno-cultural values and traditions, were the factors that led to the establishment of district offices, so that they could deliver services that would respond to the varied needs of each community.

The 1986-87 fiscal year was a complex and challenging one for the Northeast Region. Staff were able to adjust and respond to the separation of the Community Health and Social Services Divisions, coupled with the government's restraint program. It was a year that saw positive results and many accomplishments.

Highlights:

- A major milestone took place on March 27, 1987, when a four-year agreement "to provide the best and most effective services possible for children in Northeast Region" was signed between Mental Health Services (Community and Occupational Health) and Child Welfare (Social Services). This joint venture, administered by Mental Health Services and staffed and implemented by Child Welfare, saw the two Department's resources pooled and dedicated to children's mental health services. The services are to be provided, under contract, through one source.

- The 1986-87 fiscal year witnessed a continuation of the Northeast Region's commitment to review and evaluate every foster home in the region. As a result, strengths as well as weaknesses in day-to-day operations, methods of discipline, and other functions were identified. The review resulted in the closure of 74 foster homes and the reclassification of 19 others. Equally important, foster parents with special skills and strengths were identified. From this effort, two new foster parent programs evolved.

- Headquartered in St. Paul, the Parent Counsellor Permanency Placement Program is expected to provide long-term placement for children with status under the Child Welfare Act, who, because of their special circumstances, have not found suitable foster homes. Benefits are two-fold: foster homes are used as an alternative to institutional and group home care; and fewer children are taken from their home communities and placed in other areas.

- Assistance is now being given to foster parents who are experiencing problems with their foster children, and to the children's birth families. The family support worker who is hired to provide this service is an experienced foster parent who resides in the community. Expanding this successful and cost-effective service to other communities is being considered.

- Working closely with numerous Native communities, the Northeast Region has established a Native Service Unit to initiate and provide developmental assistance to various community projects. A major success is the "Alternative to Welfare" project in Calling Lake. Initiated by the community, the project (to develop the area's economic resources and provide jobs for local inhabitants), is headed and run by Natives. Support and consulting services are provided by the Northeast Region.

- Three handicapped adults were transferred from Michener Centre and successfully returned to the Northeast Region. When other people living at Michener Centre are able, and when funding is available, more of them will be returned to the Region. This is part of the Northeast Region's five-year plan to expand services to the handicapped.

- New contracted services provided for handicapped clients included behavior management, respite care, and education and training for parents of the mentally handicapped and for employees of rehabilitation agencies.

- The Northeast Region Advisory Committee, consisting of people from a variety of communities, was formed. It prepared a Regional Prevention of Family Violence Plan, which is being implemented through the Association for the Co-ordination of Family Violence Services.

EDMONTON REGION

Serving the largest Regional population base in the Province (817,365 people, according to the June, 1986 Census), 1986-87 was a year of continuing adjustment to the economic downturn for the Edmonton Region. For example, the Region's Social Allowance caseload increased from 34.5 cases per thousand population in 1981, to 63.5 cases per thousand, by June of 1986.

Regional staff coped well with the changes that occurred during the 1986-87 fiscal year, and a number of important new initiatives were set in place. The Region, of course, was not immune to the restraint programs implemented during the year.

Highlights:

- Efforts to help staff better understand particular client situations continued in 1986-87, with all personnel in the Edmonton Regional Office completing a cross-cultural training program. The program received high praise and the Regional Office was commended by the Alberta Association of Multi-Cultural Educators at their Annual General Meeting.

- Edmonton Region received additional praise from a delegation of officials from the Government of the People's Republic of China. After touring the Hys Centre District Office, as part of their 10-day visit to examine Canadian approaches to delivering social services, the Minister of Civil Affairs in China said that he was particularly impressed with the social services system in Alberta. He singled out services provided for the elderly, the young, and, particularly, the handicapped, as being well-administered and well-organized.

- Contracts for four community programs for young people were due for renewal this year. Tenders were called and resulted in programs costing $250,000 less to operate in 1986/87 than during the previous year. Innovative proposals were accepted from McMan Youth Services, Boyle Street Co-Op, and Humanacare Counselling.

- The aim of Alberta Social Services is to transfer to Native agencies, the authority for providing their own child welfare services. In January 1987, Social Services and the Yellowhead Tribal Council, which represents Indian bands in the Edmonton and Central Regions, signed a very important agreement, which transfers responsibility for child welfare services to the bands. The bands represented by the Yellowhead Tribal Council are Alexander, Alexis, Enoch, Sunchild and O'Chiese.

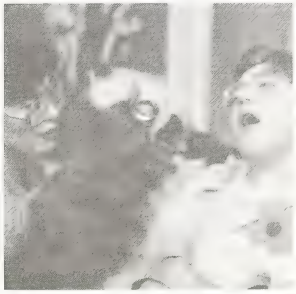
- Two additional Native resource workers were hired during the fiscal year. Assigned to Edmonton district offices as front line child welfare staff, they provide expertise and insight into the problems of Native children.

- A desire to improve efficiency in administering income security benefits has led to the opening of the Millwoods District Office. Computers were installed and new systems for processing and converting data were developed that would greatly improve the efficiency and accuracy of generating and reporting benefits to clients. The new computerized screening and intake process reduces the number of client contacts and allows for faster response in generating benefits.

- Staff of the Edson District Office worked closely with a community- based organization to set up and run a training program for Natives that is designed to prepare them for employment. After completing the program, two of the trainees were hired to work in the Edson office.

- Increased emphasis on adoption of children with special needs, during 1986-87, sparked an encouraging amount of interest by prospective adoptive parents. An Adoptive Parent Preparation and Self Assessment Group was organized by the Centennial Mall District Office, geared especially to those considering parenting a child with special needs. The group provided an opportunity for prospective parents to learn from and support each other, while assessing their own qualifications, in order to determine if such an adoption were appropriate for them.

- In January 1987, the Edmonton Region released to the public, "Planning Children's Services in the 1980's"; a publication which articulates the Region's directions for children's services and provides a foundation for future activities. Some recommendations had been implemented prior to the publication of the plan, such as closing 58 institutional beds during the fiscal year. Some of the resulting savings were used to fund Safe House, a six-bed residential facility for "street people" between the ages of 14 to 17, operated by Catholic Social Services. In addition, some reallocated funds were also used to expand the capability of Children's Treatment Services, so that they could handle children under the age of 12 who require psychiatric treatment. Other activities and plans were recommended for development during following years.



- Twenty additional parent-counsellor homes were opened for pre-teens who are under a custody agreement or temporary guardianship agreement. Parent-counsellor homes represent a highly specialized form of therapeutic foster care.

CENTRAL REGION

Over the years, Central Region has built a strong network of social and income support services, which are available to the approximately 285,000 people residing within this Region's boundaries. The requirements for services have remained relatively constant from year to year. For example, Central Region represents 10% of the provincial client population and has a caseload in both the income security and child welfare programs that is equal to 10% of the provincial total.

A major thrust of the Region during the 1986-87 fiscal year was to assist clients to become more independent and self-reliant. This was achieved by working with and enlisting the support and cooperation of the community.

Highlights:

- Wetaskiwin Centre, a residence for mentally handicapped adults and children, was closed. A community agency was contracted and appropriate alternate community living arrangements were provided. They will have suitable supervision in a setting more conducive to self-reliance and independence than is possible in an institution.

- During the fiscal year, preliminary work began on a cooperative housing project, which will provide an alternative to institutional care. When completed, the 12-suite building will provide accommodation for 24 people who are currently living in an institution, including six mentally handicapped adults now in Michener Centre. This is the first such venture in Alberta and one of the first in Canada. If successful, this community-run project will be seen as an excellent alternative to institutional care.

- A contract was signed with Woods Christian Homes to build and operate a community clinical treatment centre in Red Deer for severely disturbed youth.

- Service Coordinators were established in six District Offices in the Region. Community individuals recruited, trained and supervised by these coordinators, provide a resource pool that can be used to support families in the community.

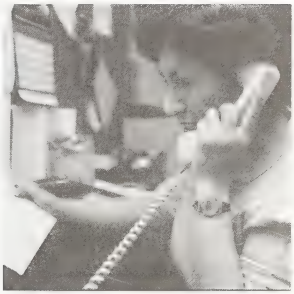
- The Region entered into several agreements with other government departments to provide less intrusive, early intervention and school-based social worker programs. This prevention-focussed effort provides support services to children and families.

- An agreement signed between Social Services, the federal government and the Yellowhead Tribal Council, (representing the Sunchild and O'Chiese Native communities), provided for the transfer of responsibility for on-reserve Child Welfare Services to the Bands.

CALGARY REGION

Calgary Region has a population of approximately 720,000. The Region contracts with over 80 independent agencies who assist in serving the needs of approximately 20,000 Social Allowance clients, 3,400 handicapped children and adults and 1,400 child welfare clients.

Highlights:



- 1986-87 was a year that saw significant organizational changes within the region. Previously, each district office had responsibility for delivering all required services to its clients. Now, each program is administered by a regional manager and all matters pertaining to the program are handled through that program's office. This has simplified the delivery system, making it easier to provide specialized services. For example, all child welfare matters are handled through one office; all services to the handicapped through another. Income security matters are also consolidated under one regional manager, but there are four offices located in various sectors of the city, plus a sub-office in Canmore, for the convenience of those receiving Social Allowance. Ranchlands and Simons Valley District Offices were no longer needed and were closed, at considerable savings to the government.

- As part of the reorganization, a new Native Child Welfare unit was created to care for the needs of Native children of the Sarcee and Morley bands, as well as urban children who are Natives. The needs of children of the Blackfoot reserve are provided for by the Blackfoot Social Services Society. Fifty percent of the staff assigned to this unit are Native.

- Community involvement became an increasingly important element in providing for children's needs during 1986-87. Two committees, representing various interests in the community, were established to work with Social Services staff and jointly decide on appropriate services and case plans for specific children. These committees are called the Placement Assessment and Review Committees (PARC), and they review each child welfare case. Members of a PARC may include psychologists, members of a foster parent or similar association, operators of group homes, educators and social workers.

- Five percent of the residential beds available in Calgary Region were closed. Savings realized from the closures were reallocated to other community projects, in keeping with the Department's preference for community-based, rather than institutional, services.

- Increased use was made of the Homebuilders Program during the fiscal year. This program, which provides for in-home counselling and assistance to families, achieved substantial success in preventing the need to apprehend and take children into care.

- In another important area, Child Sexual Abuse Treatment Services received an increase in funding from $140,000 to $266,000. This additional money provided funding for two new agencies and made it possible for the three agencies already operating to expand their services.

- A crisis nursery, operated by a community group known as Parents Anonymous, was contracted with during the fiscal year. The nursery is able to look after six children under the age of six. This facility is of great help when parents are under severe stress.

- Also during the 1986-87 fiscal year, a much-needed shelter for runaway and homeless youth was opened under the guidance of the Boys and Girls Club of Calgary. The 15-bed home is for both males and females.

- Reorganization effected a significant improvement in providing unemployed single men with Social Allowance benefits. Previously, the Single Men's Hostel was the only office from which these men could obtain assistance. With four income security offices now strategically placed in the city, unemployed single men may go to an office close to where they live. This has resulted in Social Allowance being paid to these clients within 48 hours of receiving their application.

SOUTH REGION

This Region prides itself on developing innovative programs that often set the pace. Their work in child welfare and in the Native community are good examples of the vital role that the South Region plays in the development and delivery of programs in Alberta.

Highlights:

- In 1986-87, the Family Support Program was introduced to help keep troubled families together. It deals with family situations involving children under age 18 who have been identified as "at risk". The program is flexible and takes advantage of many of the social and recreational facilities available within the community. A family support worker spends time in the child's home, providing counselling and other services to the entire family.

- The goal of the new Supported Independent Living Program is to provide 16 and 17 year-old youths with an alternative to living in an institution, foster or group home. Developed by the Children's Services Committee of the Medicine Hat District Office, this support program is the first of its kind available in the South Region.

- Conceived in 1984, the Family and Community Development Program was finalized during 1987. This program provides services for elementary school children from 5 to 13 years old who have been identified as having problems with their families in the home. This program involves cooperation from the community, not only in identifying problems and providing services, but also in its financial commitment. An agreement between the City of Lethbridge, the Public School Board, the Separate School Board, and Alberta Social Services provides the necessary administrative funds.

- During the fiscal year a telephone service was made available to deal with sexual assault crisis. The crisis line service is accessible from anywhere in the Region.

- The South Region, has the lowest percentage of Native children in care in the province. This achievement is attributed to cooperation and continuing discussions with the Blood and Peigan bands, as they negotiate to ultimately accept authority for providing child welfare services to Native children.

MICHENER CENTRE

Michener Centre, in Red Deer, is the largest single facility operated by Social Services, and employs nearly one-third of the Department's employees. It provides residential care, training and professional services for mentally handicapped persons; prepares them for life in community settings; and helps them develop to their maximum potential and independence.

The facilities at Michener Centre include: 42 residential units, including group homes, villas, lodges and apartment-style accommodation; a recreation complex which is open to the community and includes 3 pools, a gymnasium, a theatre, and an arts and crafts room; and academic and vocational training facilities.

Highlights:

- A $9 million capital development program included major improvements to the Roland Michener Recreation Centre as well as to laundry, elevators, water main, hot water and electrical systems. An additional $5 million was spent to improve utility services and facility maintenance.
- Personnel Services trained employees for a total of 2,630 man days in Orientation, C.P.R., First Aid, Administration of Medications, Medical, and miscellaneous courses.
- Michener Centre achieved an increase of 17 per cent in registered volunteers from the previous year, together with an increase of 13 per cent in the number of volunteer hours worked. During National Volunteer Week, 33 Michener volunteers were recognized for exceeding 100 hours of work.
- The Centre saw a decrease of 67 in its client population, as more residents moved into the community.

As noted in the Department Overview section, the Department is organized to deliver programs and services through the Regions, and also to develop policies and procedures and provide administrative, financial and other support services.

The following information summarizes the major responsibilities and activities related to these support services.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE DESIGN

The Policy Development and Service Design Division has the leadership role for policy, planning and program development within the Department of Social Services. It carries out this mandate within a matrix organization, which requires constant attention to communication, coordination and cooperation between headquaters planning staff, Service Delivery staff in the regions, and operational support staff throughout the Department.

Income Support:

This area is responsible for the development of technological and other program mechanisms to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of systems which place dollars in the hands of clients, either to meet basic or special needs. Methods of improving the current delivery of financial benefits to clients, and obtaining administrative savings, are a key focus. This area also provides program maintenance and support functions, such as policy development, negotiation of contracts with provincial vendors, rate adjustments, policy interpretation, etc.

Community Living:

The focus of this area is to concentrate on developing policy and program options for persons with a disability, for training, employment, day activity, residential alternatives, and personal development and support (eg., behavioral services; personal care services). The emphasis will be on community-based services, and wherever possible, the use of generic rather than specialized services for clients.

Child Protection Services:

This area develops approaches for improving the effectiveness of services which ensure the protection and/or guardianship of children. Statutory services to meet the needs of children whose survival, security or development is at risk, focus on serving children and families in their own homes and the use of least intrusive measures. Special emphasis is placed on methods of assisting Native communities to serve Native children and families who are at risk.

Family and Community Resources:

This area promotes the development of community-based services focused on family support. The intent is to prevent or reduce the need for protective or other more intrusive services, through community-based planning, and the development of innovative service options which are truly responsible to local needs, aspirations and priorities. The area works closely with Service Delivery, community interest groups and service agencies to assist them to provide for the well-being of families and children.

Service Innovation Resources:

This area conducts or coordinates market research and market testing to ensure that services reflect clients' needs. Support and expert assistance in such fields as evaluation, monitoring and quantitative methods are provided to other program areas, and planning support to the Department also falls within this area's responsibility.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

This Division provides the financial and administrative services and structure on which the Department depends in order to provide social services to Albertans. One indication of the extent of this responsibility is that approximately 35% of all Government of Alberta financial transactions take place in the Department of Social Services.

The Department's expenditures were $1.148 billion in 1986/87, an increase of $127 million or 12% over 1985/86, due primarily to increased caseloads in Social Allowance, Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH), Alberta Assured Income Plan (AAIP) and Day Care. Departmental revenue, obtained through cost sharing agreements with the federal government, was $447 million or approximately 39% of the Department's 1986/87 expenditures. An additional $106 million was collected by Social Services from the Government of Canada on behalf of other departments.

A major activity of 1986-87 was the distribution of support resources, when the two former divisions of Social Services and Community Health were split into two departments. Finance and Administration directed the necessary data collection and analysis and negotiated the final arrangements.

- This Division was responsible for implementing procedures for the application of new contract negotiation guidelines to community vocational rehabilitation programs, during this year.
- The timeliness and efficiency of access to basic client information (the "client index") was significantly improved, with the implementation of an on-line update, to replace the former reports.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Human Resources is responsible for the development and maintenance of Department-wide policies and systems to ensure effective human resource management; and the provision of staffing, classification, benefits administration, employee relations, occupation health and safety and training and staff development through headquarters and regional personnel offices.

The major activity for the Division, during the 1986/87 fiscal year, was the separation of Community Health and Social Services. Emphasis was placed on ensuring a fair and equitable process of allocating resources.

The Division was involved in the Baker Centre Redevelopment Project, redeploying staff, and implementing initiatives to increase the number of Natives employed in Child Welfare. A Native Bursary program was also established. 1,346 classification transactions were completed for the Department, of which 1,239 were Bargaining Unit, 117 were Management, and 46 were sub-level allocations.

During 1986/87, a major focus was placed on addressing alternate training and development strategies, in order to respond to the cutbacks in tuition and travel funds. Videodisc technology was used to train social workers for court and other activities.

Major activities were undertaken within Employee Relations and Salary Administration in coordinating the Department's participation in the Government's Early Retirement Incentive Program.

Activities were commenced to develop and implement a No Smoking Policy within the Department.

There were approximately 157 employees receiving L.T.D.I. benefits on a monthly basis, as of March 31, 1987.

INFORMATION RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

This unit is responsible for the Department's computerized information technology. During 1986-87 the major challenge was to develop the technical infrastructure to support the Department's electronic data processing needs for the next decade. Extensive restructuring and replacement of equipment and programs were required. The gradual introduction of planned improvements in systems for each Department service and program will supply both operational support and management information needs.

- The Department extended the use and application of its electronic mail system, through the training of 600 staff.
- Transferring of data stored on tape to disk, begun during the year, will save on storage costs and will increase efficiency and effectiveness in key areas of financial reporting.
- Information on all Social Services programs, on a geographical basis, was published in the Alberta Social Resources Inventory (ASRI) Directories. Updated ASRI Directories were published during the year and made available to various interest groups.
- Security and confidentiality of information are major concerns. Various security options were studied during the fiscal year and the most effective security technology available was incorporated into EDP systems. Security software was installed on microcomputers, for further evaluation.

MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The focus of the Management Services Group was to provide services and resources to address organizational and management effectiveness. It included Productivity Services, Management and Operational Audit, Management Support Services, Evaluation and Project Management Services and Investigation Services. This area maintained the secretariat services for the Department's Executive Committee and promoted coherent decision-making and communication processes and tools.

LEGISLATIVE PLANNING

The primary functions of this Unit include managing the legislative process for the development of the Department's legislation; initiating and participating in activities pertaining to legal, policy and program development which have legal implications for the Department; and monitoring legal and legislative developments at both the provincial and federal level, to determine possible implications for the Department's policies and programs.

- A new Department of Social Services Act was enacted at 1986, to give effect to the creation of the new Department, after the separation from Community Health.
- The Social Care Facilities Licensing Amendment Act, 1987, extended the authority of the Act to include nursery schools and family day homes, and extended the jurisdiction of the Social Care Facilities Review Committee.
- A study was carried out on the role of the Children's Guardian, to make recommendations concerning future roles, relationships and statutory authorities for the Children's Guardian and Child Welfare Services Delivery, in order to improve current policy, organization and legislative framework.
- The Unit participated in the Secure Treatment Project, which is examining issues concerning treatment, including its meaning and definition, criteria for admission, characteristics of client population, and purpose of secure treatment.

The actual 1986/87 expenditures for Social Services are shown by vote and by control group in the following tables.

The total overall costs to the Department were:

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXPENDITURES IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS - 1986-87

GRAND TOTAL VOTES 1, 2 & 3

Manpower	177,299
Supplies/Services	174,502
Grants ($000)	795,277
Fixed Assets	1,180
Other	56
Total	1,148,315

SOURCE: Finance & Administration

ALBERTA SOCIAL SERVICES

EXPENDITURES BY RESPONSIBILITY CENTRE AND CONTROL GROUP

IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS

1986/87 ACTUAL

VOTE 1	Manpower	Supplies & Services	Grants	Fixed Assets	Other	Total
Minister's Office	357	56	–	1	43	457
Appeal & Advisory	204	3	–	–	–	207
Deputy Minister - Social Services	325	233	–	2	–	560
ADM-Policy Dev. & Serv. Design	1,093	254	–	10	–	1,356
ADM - Corp. Dev., Eval. & Audit	758	264	–	–	–	1,022
ADM - Finance & Admin.	6,789	3,806	81	138	–	10,815
Exec. Director - Human Res.	3,988	485	233	58	–	4,763
Legislative Planner	153	127	–	–	–	280
Exec. Director - Mgt. Serv.	639	239	–	15	–	893
Exec. Director - I.R.M.	3,081	4,331	–	324	–	7,736
ADM - Service Del.	853	238	–	1	–	1,092
Northwest Region	3,011	891	–	16	–	3,918
Northeast Region	2,624	618	–	3	–	3,246
Edmonton Region	6,560	1,212	–	25	–	7,797
Central Region	3,301	460	–	13	–	3,774
Calgary Region	4,365	792	–	5	–	5,162
South Region	2,289	402	–	24	–	2,715
TOTAL - VOTE 1	40,390	14,411	314	635	43	55,793

ALBERTA SOCIAL SERVICES

EXPENDITURES BY RESPONSIBILITY CENTRE AND CONTROL GROUP

IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS

1986/87 ACTUAL

VOTE 2	Manpower	Supplies & Services	Grants	Fixed Assets	Other	Total
Appeal & Advisory Secretariat	33	566	–	–	–	599
ADM-Policy Dev. & Service Design	1,102	488	–	–	–	1,590
ADM - Finance & Administration	186	2	–	–	–	268
ADM - Service Del.	–	5	–	–	–	5
Northwest Region	1,995	114	–	–	–	2,109
Northeast Region	1,932	162	–	–	–	2,093
Edmonton Region	7,437	489	–	–	–	7,925
Central Region	2,105	218	-	–	–	2,322
Calgary Region	6,578	444	–	–	–	7,023
South Region	1,586	73	–	–	–	1,660
Client Payments	–	1,650	779,896	–	–	781,546
TOTAL - VOTE 2	22,954	4,291	779,896	–	–	807,140

ALBERTA SOCIAL SERVICES

EXPENDITURES BY RESPONSIBILITY CENTRE AND CONTROL GROUP

IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS

1986/87 ACTUAL

VOTE 3	Manpower	Supplies & Services	Grants	Fixed Assets	Other	Total
Appeal & Advisory Secretariat	73	639	457	3	13	1,184
ADM-Policy Dev. & Service Design	3,952	2,489	1,422	43	–	7,903
ADM - Finance & Administration	114	81	270	15	–	580
Exec. Director - Human Resources	–	3	–	–	–	3
Public Guardian	1,826	973	–	5	–	2,804
Legislative Planner	–	3	–	–	–	3
Children's Guardian	690	172	–	–	–	862
Exec. Director - Management Serv.	21	86	–	–	–	07
ADM - Service Del.	–	81	-75	–	–	6
Northwest Region	4,956	10,954	-1	43	–	15,951
Northeast Region	4,014	8,605	–	3	–	12,622
Edmonton Region	29,333	40,532	5,260	128	–	75,253
Central Region	4,547	13,554	50	1	–	18,153
Calgary Region	18,220	48,983	7,023	5	–	74,234
South Region	5,073	15,928	20	3	–	21,025
Child Welfare Serv. - Corporate	779	825	–	–	–	1,604
Exec. Director - Michener Cntr.	40,183	11,732	393	298	–	52,606
Senior Citizens Secretariat	179	63	245	1	–	488
TOTAL - VOTE 3	113,960	155,803	15,064	548	13	285,388